BY [**KAHLILAH COOKE**](http://www.uni.illinois.edu/og/user/kmcooke2)

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[**“AVATAR”**](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0499549/)

*Starring Sam Worthington, Zoë Saldaña, Michelle Rodriguez*

**Released in U.S.: Dec. 18, 2009**

DESPITE THE FACT that the newly released "[Avatar](http://www.avatarmovie.com//)" was not yet showing with captions, which I usually need because of my hearing loss, I still felt compelled to go see this movie that had been called the best and most expensive film of the year.

To be honest, I walked in without any anticipation or excitement. After checking out the trailer all I saw was a bunch of military men blowing stuff up and freaky blue people.

Then I heard it was 3D, which made me even less compelled to see it. I wasn’t in the mood to see a bunch of stuff shooting out of the screen at me.

So I settled down into my seat with a synopsis of the movie in one hand (to make up for my lack of subtitles) and a pencil in the other to jot down a few thoughts and got ready to watch another lame movie. I even made sure to see the [3D](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3-D_film) version so I could harp about how bad the special effects were.

I have never been more wrong or pleasantly surprised by a movie in my entire life.

"Avatar" is simply an incredible, amazing film. [James Cameron](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000116/), director of another visually dramatic movie, "[Titanic](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0120338/)," has truly made a unique and special movie that employs [CG](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_graphics) in a way that has literally [never been used](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avatar_(2009_film)#Filming_and_effects) before.

The special effects only serve to make the scenes more vivid and realistic, drawing you into the story emotionally and making you feel the sensations, the sights, the pain, and the joy right along with the characters.

In all fairness the movie did have a few quirks (the length and a few irritating moments in the dialogue), but I think they are so trivial that they can be easily overlooked. Some people won’t like this movie, but I think they are a select few.

"Avatar" has the perfect blend of everything: action, love, adventure, and fantasy. Whether you love fast-paced war movies or like movies with a dreamlike, fairytale quality, you are sure to love this film that is an impressive blend of the two genres.

Set in the year 2154, the film tells the story of injured ex-Marine Jake Sully ([Sam Worthington](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0941777/)), who finds out that his twin brother, Tom, a scientist, has recently been killed and that his twin was part of a program supervised by corporate and military strategists.

Because Jake and his brother are genetic matches, Jake has been offered the opportunity to fill in for his brother and take part in a potentially dangerous new mission. With hopes of a “fresh start” Jake agrees.

Even in a wheelchair Jake is still a fighter, ready to travel to Pandora, a moon with land that contains a rare mineral that has the possibility to solve Earth’s energy crisis.

The only problem is that the air in Pandora is toxic to humans so scientist have created “avatars,” which enable humans to have their consciousness linked to a body that can survive Pandora’s air. The bodies are a hybrid of human DNA and the DNA of Pandora’s natives: the Na’vi.

Jake in his Avatar form has been ordered to work his way into the Na’vi people, who are a threat to the goal of mining the ore. While on the island Jake is saved by Neytiri ([Zoë Saldaña](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0757855/)) a Na’vi who takes him to her people, the Omaticaya, and teaches Jake the Na’vi way of life.

Eventually Jake takes a place among the Na’vi. He, Neytiri, and a few other humans work to stop the humans from destroying the land and the livelihood of the Na’vi people.

The Na’vi live in a world beyond imagination — a world filled with beautiful colors and the fiercest respect for the land. The beauty of the Na’vi way of life is only heightened by the film's 3D effects. The people and the bodies look so much more rounded and lifelike. The effect is wonderfully subtle and instantly surpasses every other 2D movie ever made.

The surprising thing is that the special effects, rather than capturing me into the movie physically, drew me in so much that I don’t think I have ever been as emotionally invested in a film. When the Na’vi bellowed with sorrow as their beloved homeland was bombed by soldiers, I wanted to yell with them.

At one moment in the movie Jake states that to him the human world feels “fake” and the Na’vi world seems to be more real. That is the feeling you get after watching this movie. The pureness of the Na’vi way of life cannot be described, only felt. The beauty of the Na’vi land and their wholesome power looks so real and rings more true than any of the human gadgets and technology.

"Avatar" makes you wonder about a life that isn’t overwhelmed by technology but that instead has a true spiritual power our human society can only dream of. The film makes you question the meaning of all the man-made materials that have only served to take us farther and farther away from the Earth and its natural beauty and wonder.

If you haven't already seen "Avatar," you are definitely missing out. If you truly want to get the full experience, I encourage you to see the 3D version. It may be an extra $2.50 to see the movie, but trust me, it is so worth it!